Hi, I'm Reddy Red-tail!

I am lucky because I get to spend most of my days soaring high in the sky. Sometimes I sit perched on a tree watching over the land where I live, and sometimes I fly low over the fields looking for food to eat.

Sadly most creatures like you get to spend very little time out in nature. This is sad indeed because nature needs you, and you need nature.

I want you to get outside and explore nature. The best way to learn about my friends and the world I live in is to be curious.

That means getting dirty, smelling things, touching things, and asking questions. I have some ideas that might help you to have fun adventures outdoors.

See you outside!

I wonder...

How do animals survive outside in winter?  
Who made those tracks in the snow?  
Why do pine trees keep their leaves?  
How do bubbles get trapped in ice?

Animals have many different ways to survive outside when it gets cold. The key is finding food to burn for energy, and finding shelter to stay warm. If they can’t find food they will migrate, or move to where it is warmer. Many birds and butterflies do this.

Other animals adapt by growing thicker fur. You may notice your dog or cat gets longer fur in the winter. A few of my wild friends hibernate or go into a deep sleep. This means they slow their bodies down so they use very little energy. Bats, groundhogs, and bears do this.

Other forest friends like raccoons, chipmunks, and opossums just sleep when it is super cold out, waking up to look for food on warmer days.

Take a walk outside and look for our winter homes. Do you see any nests? That hole in the tree may be an apartment for a family of birds or raccoons. Do you see tracks leading under a pine tree? Who lives under there?
Reddy’s Nature Journal

The beginning of the year is a great time to start a nature journal. Pick a place in your yard or a park where you can visit often. Take your journal and draw what you see. How much nature can you find? Notice the trees, the sounds, the smells. What color is the sky? What shape are the clouds? Try to use as much detail as you can. Visit your nature spot often. I can’t wait to see how your journal changes throughout the year.

My friends at Red-tail Land Conservancy protect many wild places where you can explore nature. They also have free nature journals you can take with you. Ask your parents to call the office and pick one up.

I hope to spy you out exploring nature soon.

Let’s Explore

Hawks have very good eyes. This helps us spot food when we are flying above the ground. Try to spy these things as you explore outdoors this winter.

- Berries on a branch
- Animal tracks
- Your breath
- An animal tunnel
- A woodpecker hole
- A nest
- A bird singing
- Something rough

What else can you find?

Caring for Nature

You can help take care of the land and my friends. This time of year we need help finding shelter and food to survive. Try leaving piles of leaves, twigs and nuts in your yard. If you have bird feeders keep them filled.

You can also make your own feeders. Spread peanut butter or shortening on a bagel or pine cone. Roll them in birdseed and hang them on the branches of a tree or bush. You will be helping my friends and will be able to watch them visit to eat.

Just for Fun

There are lots of fun things to do outside even when it’s cold.

Play freeze tag, blow bubbles and watch them freeze, make a fort, go sledding, play hot potato with snowballs, or have a picnic with hot chocolate and cookies.

What is your favorite outdoor activity?

See ya’ in the woods.

Visit www.fortheland.org to learn more about my friends at Red-tail Land Conservancy and how you can support their work to preserve natural places. You can find properties to visit, learn about upcoming events, and get involved helping to protect nature.